

MOSQUITOES AND BLACKFLIES

NOTE:

In most cases, mosquito and blackfly bites will simply be a nuisance. However, some people have allergic reactions to the bites. Scratching bites opens the skin which may provide an opportunity for infection from other sources.

Some mosquito species transmit viruses from other animals to man. If you experience swelling of the neck glands, fever, headache or nausea, you should consult your physician.

For further information, call or write:
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MOSQUITOES

In Canada, 74 species of mosquitoes exist, more than 60 of which bite. **Mansonia perturbans**, emerging in mid-July, and **Aedes stimulans**, emerging in early spring, are the most common in southern Ontario.

Mosquitoes develop in calm or standing water, taking 28 days to grow from eggs to larvae to pupae and then to adult. Most Canadian species lay masses of 50 to 400 eggs, producing one generation each year. The adult mosquito's life span may range from seven days to one year, depending on the species.

Both the male and female mosquito feed on nectar, providing carbohydrates necessary to prolong life. However, for most Canadian species, the female also requires a blood meal to stimulate egg production.

BLACKFLIES

Only five of the 45 species of blackflies found in Ontario bite man. The most common of these are: the **Simulium venustum**, ranging from Alaska to Greenland and south to Texas; the **Prosimulium mixtum**, ranging from Ontario to Labrador and south to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec and New York; and the **Prosimulium fuscum**, found only in Ontario and Quebec. These species emerge in late spring or early summer and reach their peak in June and early July.

Blackflies, often referred to as buffalo flies or turkey flies, develop in fast-flowing streams and rivers. In their six-week life cycle, the female will lay about 500 eggs, producing one or more generations each year.

Like mosquitoes, blackflies feed on nectar and only the female of some species requires a blood meal to stimulate egg production.

CONTROL — WHAT CAN WE DO?

A) Mosquitoes:

- Eliminate all standing water and reduce areas where water may pool such as old tires, rain barrels, flower pots, clogged eavestroughs and drainage ditches.
- Change wading pool and bird bath water weekly.
- Properly chlorinate and filter swimming pools.
- Reduce excess vegetation by mowing grass, removing weeds and trimming hedges.
- Wear loose protective clothing that minimizes skin exposure.
- Restrict outdoor activity in the evening when insects are most active.
- Restrict daytime activity in heavily-wooded areas.
- Use fine-mesh netting over carriages when babies are left outside.
- Repair holes in window and door screens and check that they fit tightly in their frames.
- Close fireplace dampers when not in use.
- Use insect repellents, for temporary relief, carefully following the manufacturer's instructions on the label.

B) Blackflies:

- The larvae are most vulnerable to chemical control.
- Blackflies attack only during daylight hours, so minimize activity in the bush at these times.
- Wear clothing tightly closed at neck, wrists and ankles. A hat is highly recommended.
- Blackflies do not usually bite inside buildings.
- Repellents suitable for mosquito control are appropriate for blackflies but may not be as effective. Always read the label and follow instructions.